GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5435
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2001
INDO-IRAQ TIES
P.R. KHUTE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether our Prime Minister in a letter written to the President of Iraq had shown India`s keenness in the reconstruction of Iraq;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the bilateral relations have improved after the said letter and the details of the initiatives taken at the diplomatic level in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

a) Yes, Sir.

b) MOS(EA) had carried a letter from our Prime Minister to President of Iraq during his visit to Iraq from September 22-25, 2000, and he was accompanied by a high level business delegation.

c) As a follow up to this visit, meeting of Indo-Iraq Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on November 25-26, 2000, coinciding with the visit of Vice President of Iraq, Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadhan, from November 27-December 1, 2000.Following two Agreements were signed during the visit of Iraqi Vice President:

ii) Agreement on Economic, Technical, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation.

iii) Agreement between Oil and Natural Gas Commission - Videsh Limited (ONGC-VL) and the Iraqi Oil Exploration Company fo exploration in the Exploration Block No. 8 in Southern Iraq.

Economic interaction between India and Iraq has strengthened within the framework of Indo-Iraq Joint CommissionIn this context, Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications visited India from July 4-9, 2001 at the invitation of our Minister of Communications. Decisions in principle were taken to set up Joint Working Groups in the areas of Communications and Railways.